

## Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, IR, US

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM OF MILITARY PROGRAM IN  
IRAN

REF: TEHRAN 7332

1. CONGRESSMAN ASPIN ISSUED FOLLOWING PRESS RELEASE  
JULY 19: "THE U.S. MILITARY IS OFFERING IRAN'S ARMED  
FORCES CONFLICTING ADVICE AND PROVIDING "TOTALLY INADE-  
QUATE" MANAGEMENT OF SOME OF ITS 10 BILLION DOLLARS WORTH  
OF MILITARY SALES CONTRACTS, ACCORDING TO THE RESULTS OF  
TWO STATE DEPARTMENT PROBES PUBLICLY RELEASED TODAY BY  
REP. LES ASPIN (D-WIS).

'ASPIN SAID TODAY THAT THE FINDINGS OF A THIRD AND BROADER  
INVESTIGATION OF THE MILITARY SALES PROGRAM IN IRAN ARE  
BEING SUPPRESSED. ASPIN IS SEEKING RELEASE OF THE SECRET  
DOCUMENT UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

'ASPIN TERMED THE SALES PROGRAM IN IRAN "A MANAGERIAL  
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NIGHTMARE." "THE MANAGEMENT OF SOME CONTRACTS APPEARS TO

BE ABSOLUTE ANARCHY WITH EVERYONE MADLY SHUFFLING PAPERS, BUT NOBODY IN CHARGE," ASPIN ASSERTED IN A STATEMENT TODAY.

'SPECIFICALLY, THE REPORT PREPARED BY THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT CRITICIZED A CONTRACT FOR THE IMPROVED HAWK AIR DEFENSE MISSILE.

"EACH TIME A NEW (WEAPON) SYSTEM IS INTRODUCED, IT IS NECESSARY TO REINVENT THE WHEEL" IN TERMS OF PROPER MANAGEMENT THE REPORT STATES.

'THE SECOND REPORT DETAILS CONFLICTING ADVICE GIVEN BY THE U.S. MILITARY TO IRAN ON ITS EFFORTS TO COMPUTERIZE ITS MILITARY OPERATIONS, ASPIN EXPLAINED.

'FOR EXAMPLE, AT THE SAME TIME THE ARMY AND THE AIR FORCE WERE TRYING TO "EXPEDITE" THE PURCHASE OF A COMPUTER PROGRAM, THE NAVY WAS "FIGHTING" THE PROPOSAL, ACCORDING TO THE REPORT.

'SIMILARLY, THE AIR FORCE RECOMMENDED THAT IRAN HIRE U.S. MILITARY RETIREES TO WORK AS COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS, WHILE THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE U.S. MILITARY MISSION TOLD IRAN THAT IT MAY BE ILLEGAL TO HIRE U.S. RETIREES BECAUSE OF AMERICAN CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAWS.

'IRAN IS BUYING A WIDE VARIETY OF SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS THROUGH A SERIES OF GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS INCLUDING THE F-14, THE NAVY'S LATEST DESTROYER--THE DD-963--AND A VARIETY OF HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED ELECTRONIC GEAR.

'UNDER THE GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENT, THE U.S. IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CONTRACT AND ASSISTS IN THE TRAINING OF IRANIAN MILITARY PERSONNEL.

"IT IS NIGH IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE WHO HAS PRIME RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND MONITORSHIP," THE REPORT SAYS.

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'NUMEROUS U.S. MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS ARE INVOLVED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE MISSILE SYSTEM WITHOUT ANY ONE GROUP BEING GIVEN OVERALL ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY, ASPIN EXPLAINED.

'THE REPORT ALSO TERMS AS "INADEQUATE" THE ADMINISTRATION OF 23 CONTRACTS VALUED AT 14 MILLION DOLLARS TO TRAIN IRANIAN G.I.S FOR REPAIRING AND OPERATING MILITARY EQUIP-

MENT.

'THE REPORT ADDS THAT THE 1.6 BILLION DOLLAR PROGRAM TO SELL 80 HIGH PERFORMANCE F-14 FIGHTERS "WILL FACE THE SAME TYPE OF PROBLEMS" AS THE ON-GOING PROGRAMS CRITICIZED BY THE PROBE.

'THE INVESTIGATION DOES SAY THAT SOME PROGRAMS ARE WELL RUN, BUT THAT THERE IS LITTLE EFFORT BY THE U.S. MILITARY TO LEARN FROM PAST MISTAKES.

'COMPOUNDING THE MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS ARE THE IRANIAN'S OWN INEXPERIENCE IN ADMINISTERING CONTRACTS AND A SHORTAGE OF "TRAINABLE" PERSONNEL, THE PROBE SAYS.

'THE REPORT ADDS THAT THE LACK OF EFFICIENCY BY THE U.S. WILL PREVENT IRAN FROM OBTAINING "DESIRED DEFENSE CAPABILITY AND OUR RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN COULD SUFFER AVOIDABLE STRAIN."

'ASPIN HAS BEEN CRITICAL BOTH OF THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF ARMS SALES TO IRAN WHICH TOTAL APPROXIMATELY 1.3 BILLION DOLLARS DURING THE LAST FISCAL YEAR.

'THE WISCONSIN DEMOCRAT FEARS THAT SALES MAY CREATE INSTABILITY IN THE PERSIAN GULF REGION AND INADVERTANTLY DRAW THE U.S. INTO DOMESTIC OR INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS INVOLVING IRAN.

""WITH U.S. TECHNICIANS OPERATING MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING THE IRANIANS, WE MAY BE UNEXPECTEDLY AND UNWITTINGLY DRAWN INTO A CONFLICT THAT DOES NOT AFFECT ANY OF OUR VITAL NATIONAL INTERESTS," ASPIN SAID.

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'ASPIN PLANS EVENTUALLY TO SUE IN FEDERAL COURT FOR THE RELEASE OF THE SUPPRESSED INVESTIGATIVE REPORT IF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE REFUSES TO DECLASSIFY IT."

2. REPORTS TO WHICH ASPIN REFERS AND QUOTES ARE RECENT IGA REPORTS, "AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING PROGRAMS, SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, IRAN" AND "CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, IRAN." THESE REPORTS RESULTED FROM SECOND VISIT OF IGA INSPECTORS.

3. FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE WILL BE USED IF QUESTIONS RAISED:

Q. DOES THE DEPARTMENT HAVE A COMMENT ON CONGRESSMAN LES

ASPIN'S CRITICISM OF OUR ARMS SALES PROGRAM TO IRAN?

A. FOR A PROGRAM OF THIS SIZE AND COMPLEXITY THERE ARE BOUND TO BE SOME MANAGERIAL PROBLEMS. LAST YEAR, IN RECOGNITION OF THE NEED TO IMPROVE OUR MANAGEMENT, A DEFENSE REPRESENTATIVE AND A SMALL STAFF OF SPECIALISTS WERE ASSIGNED TO TEHRAN. THE STATE AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENTS ARE ACTIVELY STUDYING THE INSPECTORS' REPORTS REFERRED TO. WE ARE SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS OF OUR EFFORTS.

Q. WHY DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT REFUSE TO RELEASE THESE INSPECTORS' REPORTS?

A. THESE DOCUMENTS ARE INTERNAL AGENCY MEMORANDA AND ARE THEREFORE EXEMPT FROM RELEASE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

IF PRESSED:

A. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE REPORTS OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL DEPENDS ON HIS ABILITY TO BE CANDID; THEREFORE, WE DO NOT RELEASE ANY SUCH REPORTS." KISSINGER

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